

THE  
CONAUGHT WIFE.

A  
COMEDY  
OF  
TWO ACTS.

As it is performed

At the THEATRE in SMOCK-ALLEY,  
DUBLIN,

---

LONDON;

Printed for J. WILLIAMS, at No. 38, near the  
Mitre Tavern in Fleet-Street.

MDCCLXVII

[ Price One Shilling. ]

COLLAUGHT WINE



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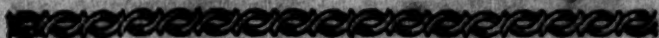
the Tavern in Smock Alley,  
DUBLIN.

W. D. O. M.

James St. 2. W. D. O. M. at No. 28. near the  
Gate Tavern in 1807-2000.

MECCLEVII

[Price One Shilling.]



CONTRACT WIFE.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

Mr. Fretfull,  
Vainlove,  
Landlord,  
Terry Moriarty,  
Tippie,  
Constable,  
Watch,

Mr. HOLLOCOMBE.  
Mr. JEFFERYS.  
Mr. DUNCAN.  
Mr. JONES.  
Mr. RYDER.  
Mr. REMINGTON.  
Mr. Taylor, Mr. Ward, &c.

*Mob and Servants.*

W O M E N.

Mrs. Fretfull,  
Katty,  
Water-Woman.

Mrs. JEFFERYS.  
Miss VANDERMERE.

SCENE, DUBLIN.



DRAMATIS PERSONAE

MEN

MR. HOLLOCOMBE  
MR. JEFFREYS  
MR. DUNCAN  
MR. JONES  
MR. RYDER  
MR. RAYNOR  
MR. JONES, Mr. Ryder, &c.

Mr. Pritchard  
Mr. Pritchard  
Mr. Pritchard  
Mr. Pritchard  
Mr. Pritchard  
Mr. Pritchard  
Mr. Pritchard

WOMEN

MR. JEFFREYS  
MR. JEFFREYS

Mr. Pritchard  
Mr. Pritchard  
Mr. Pritchard

SCENE DURING

THE CONAUGHT WIFE.

ACT I.

SCENE an INN.

[Ringing without]. Enter LANDLORD.

VAINLOVE without.

SHEW a room.

LANDLORD.

This way, sir. [Enter Vainlove.]

Servant, sir.

VAINLOVE.

Sir, your servant. If your claret is good, and your usage civil, I shall stay with you some time.

LANDLORD.

For claret, port, frontenac, and eight *Bordeaux* usquebaugh, I defy any inn in *Dublin* to match: I get none of the latter but from the original maker himself, sealed with his own seal, signed with his own name, entirely in the same manner as he sets forth in the advertisement.

VAINLOVE.

Let us taste some of that usquebaugh.

LANDLORD.

That you shall. Here Pat. [Enter Waiter.] Bring a noggin of usquebaugh.

WAITER.

Yes, sir.

Exit.

VAINLOVE.

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VAINLOVE.

Pray does not one Mr. *Presfull* live hereabouts?

LANDLORD.

Yes, sir; he married a young lady from *Conaught*, and brought her to town last week.

VAINLOVE.

Ay, the same. *(Enter Waiter with usquebaugh.)*

LANDLORD.

Odso, here is the usquebaugh; taste it, sir.

VAINLOVE.

*(Drinks.)* 'Tis very good, but confounded strong.

LANDLORD.

Good sir; 'twould do your heart good to hear what the gentleman says of it that makes it. *(Drinks.)* Why, sir, there is not a disorder in the whole *Material Medical* but what its good for; *(Drinks.)* provided it be taken, as the gentleman himself says, in proper quantities *(Drinks.)* Will you have any more, sir?

VAINLOVE.

Not now. Pray do you know the gentleman I was enquiring after?

LANDLORD.

No, sir; but there is a poor fellow in the yard, a *Monksman*, that lately liv'd with him, I believe he can inform you; shall I send him to you?

VAINLOVE.

You will oblige me. *(Exit Landlord.)* I am come all the way from *Conaught* to *Dublin* after another man's wife---A very whimsical business faith! But then she was my mistress, she lov'd me before she was his wife. But then I forsook her, after a thousand oaths and protestations to the contrary; that was her own fault, for she would never trust me after all, without church security; which, when I absolutely refused, she married another to vex me. And now, I hope, she will cuckold him, to oblige me and please herself. *(Enter Terry.)* O this is the man the inn-keeper was telling me of, I suppose. Did you live with Mr. *Presfull*, friend?

TERRY.

Ay, by my shoul, did I; I wish I had never come to *Dublin*, my jewel; all that I had I have lost now, for my master has turned me away, and would not pay me too.

VAINLOVE.

THE CONAUGHT WIFE. 5

VAINLOVE.

What countryman are you?

TERRY.

An *Irishman*, my dear.

VAINLOVE.

What part?

TERRY.

Oh, my jewel, *Munster* for ever; I was born in the brave county of *Kerry*, but I wish I had been no county at all, it had been better for me I had been sick of a great cold in my grave, before I com'd here.

VAINLOVE.

Ha! ha! A mighty simple fellow this! [*Afide.*] And so you have lost your country, ha friend?

TERRY.

Ay, lost indeed; I wish I never had found it; but I have lost all my wages, I tell you.

VAINLOVE.

And how much might your wages be?

TERRY.

Indeed I cannot tell how much it may be when I get it, but I am sure 'tis nothing at all now, nor that itself.

VAINLOVE.

I must humour this fellow, or I shall get nothing out of him: and so your master has turn'd you away.

TERRY.

O yes; he turn'd me away before he had me I think: I was upon liking, and he did not like me, so he turned me away.

VAINLOVE.

How long was you upon liking?

TERRY.

He did not like me, I tell you; he likes nobody; I was with him three quarters, and he hated me all the while.

VAINLOVE.

That's hard indeed; but how does he live with his wife?

TERRY.

They call me honest *Terry Moriarty*, and some people love me for all that; oach hone, I wish I had been blind when I first saw the nose upon his face.

VAINLOVE.

He's so full of his own story, if I won't hear, that, I find, shall

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I shall hear nothing else. [*Aside.*] Well, honest Terry, and what made him turn you away?

TERRY.

Oh! my dear, please your honour, it was for a small matter indeed, nothing in the whole world but because my little garrawn bawn a horse as I do's ride when I does not go a foot, did eat up a piece of one of his boots.

VAINLOVE.

A horse eat boots! ha! ha! ha!—Don't you lie, honest Terry?

TERRY.

No indeed, I hate a liar as poor as I am—I will tell you how it was.—Master, did call me up in my sleep one morning before it was day—O faith, 'twas not half day; so he did say, *Terry, Terry*, come stir and be damn'd to you. He will swear like a devil sometimes.

VAINLOVE.

Ay, very like; the citizens will ape us of the beau monde, tho' they swear with as little air as they dress.

TERRY.

But I believe he was very good crifton for all that too.

VAINLOVE.

Why do you think so?

TERRY.

Because he have so many great big bags in his counter house.

VAINLOVE.

But how came your horse to eat your master's boots?

TERRY.

Why, did you never see a horse eat boots in your life?

VAINLOVE.

Not I indeed.

TERRY.

Arrah, where was you born? If you was ever in *Munster*, you might see horses eat boots, and bridles, and saddles too:

VAINLOVE.

Prithce explain yourself, if you know how.

TERRY.

Why, they make a great many of bridles and saddles of hay there; so I and my master was at *Nenagh*, a roop, together alone, and he has a gout in his foots, so that he could

The CONAUGHT WIFE: 9

could not pull on his *English* boots made of leather; so he said, *Terry*, go fetch some hay, and make some boots, boy.

VAINLOVE,

Very well.

TERRY.

So I made some for myself first, and then I made some for my master after, and put them on his legs; and he did say, very well, *Terry*; then I helped him on his horse, and mounted my own little garrawn bawn, and did ride behind him; so we stopp'd to take a sup of a dram, at *Paddy McGluddery's*, at the sign of *St. Patrick*, on this side *Nenagh*, my poor little horse was hungry, and did go bite a little of my master's hay boots, and bite a little too deep, and did take away a piece of his leg.

VAINLOVE.

For which your master turned you away.

TERRY.

No, he knocked me down first, and then I did run away afterwards.

VAINLOVE.

Did you never go for your wages?

TERRY.

No, my dear, I did not go to him, for fear he should knock out my brains agen; but he has never paid me for all that, no, the devil a penny.

VAINLOVE.

Ha! ha! I don't know how he should. Is your master rich, *Terry*?

TERRY.

Rich! ay, by my soul, is he, and very rich too; he has a great deal of money, and goods in his warehouse, and ships at sea, he was a merchant, and they say that is a good trade to get money by.

VAINLOVE.

How does he use his wife?

TERRY.

He does not use her at all, at all.

VAINLOVE.

No!

2

TERRY;

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TERRY.

No, nor his money neither, for he locks 'em both up.

VAINLOVE.

Then he's jealous, Terry?

TERRY.

Ay, and *gurtagh* too. I am very hungry, my jewel, will you give me a farthing or two to buy me a penny loaf for my breakfast to night.

VAINLOVE.

Answer me a few questions, and I'll give you any thing. What maid has your mistress?

TERRY.

Mrs. Katty is her maid, and a very good maid too.

VAINLOVE.

Her old friend and confidant still I find: that's lucky. [*Aside.*] Terry, I'll give you half a crown if you will carry a letter for me.

TERRY.

Arrah is it I?

VAINLOVE.

What the devil ails the fellow?

TERRY.

D'ye take me for a porter? a porter indeed!

VAINLOVE.

He must have his way.—Where does your master live?

TERRY.

He lives upon *Lazy-Hill*, when he's there?

VAINLOVE.

Will you shew me the way there?

TERRY.

Ay, ay, I'll shew you any where, by my soul, but I would not be your porter; I believe he is a rogue for all that.

VAINLOVE.

Here's half a crown for you: come away.

TERRY.

Long life to you; he's a brave gentleman: come along my dear, and I'll follow.

SCENE

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SCENE, a DINING-ROOM.

Enter Mr. and Mrs. FRETFULL.

Mr. FRETFULL.

The clock has struck eight, and your jade of a maid is gaping at the door according to custom, I suppose.

Mrs. FRETFULL.

My maid and I have a fine time on't truly.

Mr. FRETFULL.

Katty, lock the street-door, and bring me the key.

Mrs. FRETFULL.

I had rather be carried out of the door dead, than be buried alive thus.

Mr. FRETFULL.

What is it that you want?

Mrs. FRETFULL.

Every thing—I want my liberty.

Mr. FRETFULL.

Are not you married?

Mrs. FRETFULL.

To my sorrow.

Mr. FRETFULL.

Then am I not your lord and master?

Mrs. FRETFULL.

My tyrant and my goaler I'm sure you are.—In short, your jealousy and covetousness are insupportable.

Mr. FRETFULL.

Because I won't trust my wife, nor my money, out of my hands, but upon good security. I am a tyrant and a goaler; but pray, what liberties wou'd content you?

Mrs. FRETFULL.

I desire none but what are very reasonable I assure you: such as giving and receiving of visits from women of fashion and character, going to the *New Gardens*, to balls, assemblies, and sometimes to *Crow-Street* and *Smock-Alley*, to see a play.

Mr. FRETFULL.

O horrid! are these your reasonable liberties? balls, assemblies, *Crow-Street* and *Smock-Alley*! Balls and assemblies, are the schools of wickedness; the play-house is a nursery for the devil; 'tis at those places that women

EARN

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learn to load their husband's heads, and lighten their pockets.

Mrs. FRETFULL.

Am I such a one? Should I make such an ill use of your kindness?

Mr. FRETFULL.

I don't intend to try you.

Mrs. FRETFULL.

Base man!

Mr. FRETFULL.

I will not be a cuckold, wife.

Mrs. FRETFULL.

Ungenerous brute!

Mr. FRETFULL.

I won't be a beggar neither.

Mrs. FRETFULL.

You deserve to be both.

Mr. FRETFULL.

And when I give you an opportunity, I shall expect it. I would advise you to know when you are well.—I allow you to keep your old servant and confidant, *Katty*; tho' I know she's no friend of mine.—And then, because you was spoiled, and used to late hours before I had you, tho' I go to bed at eight o'clock, I let you sit up here with your maid till ten.

Enter KATTY.

So, are you come at last. Give me the key. You know your time, wife, don't abuse my indulgence; if you do.—you understand me,—so, till then, good night.

KATTY.

Oh madam! I have the strangest news to tell you.—but first let me be sure we are not overheard [*Shuts the door.*] I was never so surprized in my life.

Mrs. FRETFULL.

What's the matter?

KATTY.

As I was at the door taking a little fresh air, before we were locked up for to night, who should I see but your quondam servant, *Mr. Vainlove*.

Mrs. FRETFULL.

Bless me! that's surprizing indeed! What should he come to *Dublin* for?

KATTY.

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KATTY.

No good to be sure. He came up to me, and, with a saucy air, verry familiarly took me by the hand, and told me, he waited there on purpose to speak with me.

Mrs. FRETFULL.

What's his business?

KATTY.

I asked him, and he said, truly it was to entreat me to acquaint you that he was come from the country, full of love and penitence, to receive a pardon from your lips, or to die at your feet.

Mrs. FRETFULL.

As full of vanity, I perceive, as ever; but the conceited coxcomb shall find himself mistaken,—for I'll never see him more.

KATTY.

I knew your mind, and therefore ventured to tell him so; but he, with an impudent sneer, told me, that I was mistaken, for he must and would see you, in spite of your resolution and your husband's jealousy, let the consequence be what it would.

Mrs. FRETFULL.

Amazing impudence! when, where, and how? It is impossible.

KATTY.

Now hear, and for the possibility of it, as he has laid his scheme, it is not only possible but hard for you to prevent it, without making yourself the talk of the whole neighbourhood.

Mrs. FRETFULL.

How can that be?

KATTY.

He's as well informed of the affairs of the family as if he had lived in it; knows your husband's suspicious temper, and your confinement; knows that he is a bed, and you here, and is resolved to climb up into the balcony (no difficult matter you know, considering the situation of the house) and so come into this room.

Mrs. FRETFULL.

Does he think that I will admit him?

KATTY.

Without doubt his assurance makes him hope every thing:

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thing; nor can I see how you can refuse it, without giving your wife husband what he will think some grounds for his suspicion: For tho' he never saw him, yet as he has heard there was formerly a love affair between you, he will conclude that you must have given him some encouragement to make this attempt.

Mr. FRETFULL.

That would make me miserable indeed.

KATTY.

On the other hand, by admitting of him, and giving him such a reception as he deserves, you may convince him of the folly of his presumption, and so prevent him from ever troubling you again.

Mrs. FRETFULL.

Were I sure of that—

KATTY.

You don't doubt your own resolution, I hope?

Mrs. FRETFULL.

You know me better; but he may be rude.

KATTY.

What! and I here? I think I should not be able on such an occasion.

Mrs. FRETFULL.

You don't know the man.

KATTY.

But I know that we are two women, and women of resolution, and that I am sure is more than a match for any man in *Christendom*: Besides, at worst we can but raise the house. But I hear him in the balcony, shall I let him in?

Mrs. FRETFULL.

Do what you will—but I can never bear the sight of him.

(Katty opens the door.)

Enter VAINLOVE.

KATTY.

Here he is, pray tell him so.

VAINLOVE.

My dear, dear angel, let me fly to your arms.

Mrs. FRETFULL.

Devil, stand off! and, in the name of impudence, tell me what I have done to deserve this usage from you?

VAINLOVE.

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VAINLOVE.

Look'ye, my dear, you may give yourself what airs you please; but I am sure you have more sense than to be really angry with me.

Mrs. FRETFULL.

Surprising assurance!

VAINLOVE.

Ridiculous affectation!

Mrs. FRETFULL.

Contrary to my inclination to force a visit on me, and, in so scandalous! so dangerous a manner too!

VAINLOVE.

Now that alone ought to convince you of the violence of my love, and incline you to reward it.

Mrs. FRETFULL.

If I don't reward you as you deserve, you may assure yourself it is not for want of inclination. But what do you promise yourself from this extraordinary piece of gallantry to another man's wife?

VAINLOVE.

Can't you guess?

Mrs. FRETFULL.

Not I indeed.

VAINLOVE.

You wouldn't have me tell you before your maid,

Mrs. FRETFULL.

If you think proper.

VAINLOVE.

I don't think it is altogether so proper. So, child, if you would be pleased to withdraw a little, I should be mightily obliged to you.

KATTY.

Sir, I don't value an obligation to you of this (*snapping her fingers*) and I won't withdraw.

VAINLOVE.

Indeed, my dear, but you must. Your lady and I have an affair to dispatch that require privacy.

KATTY.

I don't hear her say so.

VAINLOVE.

Madam, will you be pleased to speak to this obstinate girl?

Mrs

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Mrs. FRETFULL.

There's no need of it *he*, she knows my mind without.

VAINLOVE.

Dear Mrs. Katty, I heartily beg your pardon. I was so much in haste to bring things to a conclusion with your lady, that I quite forgot the necessary preliminaries.

*(Gives her money.)*

KATTY.

Tho' it be out of character as a chambermaid to refuse money, yet I have more conscience than to receive a bribe when I don't like the conditions.

*(Throws down the money.)*

Mrs. FRETFULL.

Sir, I suppose by this time you are convinced that your journey to *Dublin*, so far as it related to me, will turn to no manner of account; ha! ha! ha!

VAINLOVE.

I am not so easily put out of countenance as you imagine; and since you won't trust yourself with a witness, 'tis but putting out the candle, and then it is the same thing to me as if there was nobody here but us two.

Mrs. FRETFULL.

What do you mean? Do but attempt it, and we'll raise the house.

VAINLOVE.

No, you won't do that for your own sake; for if you do, I'll swear I came here by your appointment.

Mrs. FRETFULL.

You are base enough to swear any thing, but my maid can prove the contrary.

VAINLOVE.

I can take off her evidence, by swearing that she was the agent employed to invite me hither.

KATTY.

Was ever such a villain heard of before!

*(Tries without knocking.)*

Thieves! fire! murder! Mr. *Fretfull*, Mr. *Fretfull*! I did see a thief come in at the balcony; you will be robb'd, and burn't, and kill't alive in your beds.

VAINLOVE.

O the devil! what shall we do now!

Mrs.

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Mrs. FRETFULL.

My husband will find him here, and I shall be ruined!

[Terry still knocking.]

TERRY without. Thieves! Thieves!

Mr. FRETFULL within.

Where? where?

TERRY without.

In your house; I brought the watch and constable, open the door.

Mr. FRETFULL.

I am coming, Terry, I am coming.

KATTY.

That's my master's voice.

VAINLOVE.

No way to escape.

Mrs. FRETFULL.

What will my husband think.

[Terry still knocking.]

KATTY.

The fore part of the house is beset, there's no going the way you came in; but this closet has a window that looks into the garden: if you would drop from thence, 'tis not so dark but you may find your way over the wall.

VAINLOVE.

Ay, ay, any way to get off.—Madam, your servant.—Curst fortune! what an opportunity is here lost!

[Exit with Katty.]

Mrs. FRETFULL.

So, I am delivered from him; but how I shall come off with my husband, heaven knows! [Katty re-enters.]

KATTY.

We are rid of him at last, but now for my master.—Let us join in the cry.—Thieves! Thieves!

Enter FRETFULL, TERRY, Constable, and Watch.

Mr. FRETFULL.

Where is he?

KATTY.

He was here just now.

C

Mr.

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Mr. FRETFULL.

Which way could he escape?

KATTY.

Out of the closet-window, I believe, sir; he went that way.

TERRY.

I did see him first, sir.

Mr. FRETFULL.

No words now, honest Terry, but down into the garden,—we may have him yet.

[*Exeunt Mr. Fretfull, Terry, Constable and Watch.*]

KATTY.

Madam, won't you follow, and see the event?

Mrs. FRETFULL.

I am too much interested in Vainlove's escape at this time, not to wish it; tho' I despise the man. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE, a GARDEN-WALL.

VAINLOVE gets over it.

VAINLOVE.

They are at my heels; which way shall I take? Luck, direct me. [*Exit.*] [*The garden door opens.*]

Enter FRETFULL, TERRY, Constable, &c.

Mr. FRETFULL.

I saw him leap from the wall.

TERRY.

So did I, but he is not here for all that too.

CONSTABLE.

But which way is he gone?

Mr. FRETFULL.

I think this way.

CONSTABLE.

No. I think that.

TERRY.

By my soul, I think he has gone both ways, my dear.

Mr.

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MR. FRETFULL.

Let us divide ourselves, some this way, and some that.

OMNES.

Ay, ay, some this way, and some that, follow.

[*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E, the Street.

Enter VAINLOVE running.

VAINLOVE.

With twice hazarding my neck, breaking my shins, and a good number of rubs and bruises besides, I think I am come off at last;—but where am I? S'dearth! this is the front of *Fretfull's* house. I wish I was safe at my inn. [*Going. Watch without, follow, follow.*] Pox on 'em, they are at the end of the street; that's no way for me. [*Going the other, a noise there too.*] Confound them, there's another troop coming that way too.—How the devil shall I avoid them? No place to hide me in till they are past—no friendly door open.—What's here? a hoghead!—Empty too, I hope; 'tis so.—I shall make bold to occupy it for the present. [*Gets in.*] It's but a scurvy tenement, that's the truth on't; but better than falling into their hands however.

—Enter Waterwoman, with a tub of water.

WATERWOMAN.

A plague of my forgetfulness!—but when I am with my sweetheart, I can remember nothing else I think—Now must I fetch water from the pipe, to fill this farnel vessel, before I can begin my washing this morning: the devil I would not be a servant in *Dublin*.—Would I were once married for my part.

[*Pours the water into the hoghead.*]

VAINLOVE.

Zounds! you whore, what do you do? You have drowned me.

## WATERWOMAN.

Marry hang you, what business have you there? You have spoiled my whole tub of water, that cost me many a weary step the fetching.—But 'cod, I think, I have fous'd you finely; and am glad of it with all my heart; ha! ha! ha!

## VAINLOVE.

You damn'd, confounded jade, if I come out, I'll kick you to the devil.

## WATERWOMAN.

Nay, an you scold so soon after the fine fousing I have given you, you'll be very faudy when your coat is dry; ha! ha! ha!

Enter TIPPLE drunk, and singing.

## TIPPLE.

This *Mart* beer is excellent good drink.

## VAINLOVE.

There's somebody else a coming.—I must draw in my horns again, tho' I sit up to my knees in water.

## TIPPLE.

I wonder what o'clock it is.—I am afraid it is past eight; if so, there will be no getting in this night.—I wonder how the devil I came to fall asleep over my liquor?—Special drink it was too faith.—If I could but find my way home now; or to the *Vidern* again,—which is the same thing. [*Reels against the hog's head.*]

## VAINLOVE.

I shall be discovered at last; but it is no great matter.—I shall die with cold if I stay longer here.

[*Watchmen cry within.*]

## TIPPLE.

Ha! is it the wind or the city waits, that makes that dismal noise—No its the wind.—Sad work at sea now.

Enter

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Enter one party of the watch.

WATCHMAN.

Stand, who goes there?

TIPPLE.

Stand—Indeed now I can't stand without lying down first—Has the college-bell gone nine think you?

WATCHMAN.

Nine, why 'tis past midnight; who the devil are you?

TIPPLE.

Don't swear so friend—I am very sick—This beer at the *Vulcan* is sad stuff—and I am sure there's something more in it than water and hops.

WATCHMAN.

Who the devil are you? I say.

TIPPLE.

Why! who the devil are you, if you come to that.

WATCHMAN.

Lay hold on him, and bring him away to the watch-house.

TIPPLE.

I won't go—touch me if you dare, you drunken rascals.

[*They seize him, he holds by the hog'shead, and pulls it down; Vainlove creeps out, they seize him.*]

Enter Mr. FRETFULL, TERRY, CONSTABLE, &c.

WATCHMAN.

Seize him, hold him fast.—O, Sir, we have got the thief.

Enter Mrs. FRETFULL and Katty, at the door.

CONSTABLE.

Bring him before me.—Sirrah! who are you? what are you? where do you live? and whither are you going?

VAIN-

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VAINLOVE.

I am a gentle; I live in *Conaught*, and am come to *Dublin* on a party of pleasure.

Mr. FRETFULL.

No doubt of it; and so you call at my house for something to bear your charges home again. There are a great many such gentlemen as you in all public places; but since gentlemen keep company with thieves at the gaming-tables, no wonder thieves become gentlemen.

CONSTABLE.

Silence there, I am the magistrate for the night, let me examine him.

TIPPLE.

I believe the fellow's a pick-pocket, for he looks as if he had been dragg'd thro' a horse-pond. — But while the door's open, I'll steal in and go soberly to bed, for fear my master should examine me. [Exit Tipple.]

Mrs. FRETFULL.

Who have you got there, my dear?

Mr. FRETFULL.

The house-breaker, child.

KATTE.

O dear sir, here's some sad mistake, this is not the man who came to rob us.

Mr. FRETFULL.

No!

Mrs. FRETFULL.

No indeed, my dear.

TERRY.

This is not the thief, this is the gentleman that do lodge at the inn; I do know him very well.

Mr. FRETFULL.

We are all in the wrong here, my wife and my maid says that this is not the man. — What shall we do? — we may come into trouble for detaining him. [To Const.]

CONSTABLE.

Let me alone for that. — Look you, sir, we find you are not the person we took you for — so if you please to give something that's handsome, do you see, to make the

The CONAUGHT WIFE. 23

the watchmen drink for their trouble,—you may go about your business.

VAINLOVE.

Mr. Constable, you are the mirror of modern magistracy.

[Gives him money.]

CONSTABLE.

A crown, by *Jeremy*; I never met with a civiler gentleman in all my life—sir, will you have a watchman to light you home?

VAINLOVE.

Civil scoundrel!—I shall endeavour to find my way to my lodgings without giving you, or your janifaries there, any farther trouble.

Mr. FRETFULL.

Sir, I am very sorry—

VAINLOVE.

'Tis mighty well, Sir, pray no apologies; tho' rot me, but I am consumedly out of countenance, to think what a figure I make before the ladies.

KATTY.

O dear sir, we judge your misfortune's owing to some unsuccessful piece of gallantry, and are mightily concerned for your disappointment.

Mrs. FRETFULL.

Tho'—If the cruel lady, for whose sake you have suffered all these misfortunes, saw you in your present circumstances, she must needs pity you—at least as much as I do.

KATTY.

Tho' after all, it may be a just judgment upon him for his falshood to some forsaken virgin.

Mrs. FRETFULL.

Or his wicked attempts upon another man's wife.

KATTY.

Or his impudently threatening to brag of favours, because he was refused them; ha! ha!

VAINLOVE.

Perhaps I may'nt be the only person that has been disappointed to night; and so, ladies, your humble servant.

[Exit.]

Mr.

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**Mr. FRETFULL.**  
Perhaps so too.—A fly dog! I don't like him. [*Aside.*]  
Come wife, we have made but a scurvy piece of business of it here.—But let us go to bed, and strive to forget.—**Mr. Constable,** good night; come, honest **Terry,** do you go with us.—I will find the bottom of this affair, if possible. [*Exeunt all but Terry.*]

**TERRY.**

Good night! I think it be good morning; but I have make a brave day's work of it to-night for all that.—My master did call me honest **Terry,** and bid me come in, so I shall have my place again; my shelf was not very wise, but **St. Patrick** sends me good luck for all that sometime..

Better to starve than steal, was **Paddy's** creed,  
But eat and be honest too—was brave indeed.

[*Exit.*]

End of the First Act.

ACT



ACT II.

SCENE the First.

A Room in FRETFULL'S House.

Enter Mrs. FRETFULL and KATTY.

Mrs. FRETFULL.

**H**IS jealousy is so increased, by reflecting on what happened last night, that now it knows no bounds.

KATTY.

Then you are resolved to go on with your design.

Mrs. FRETFULL.

There's a necessity for it; could I convince him of my innocence, we might both be happy; from the pain his groundless suspicions give him, I am sure he loves me.—I don't know which suffers most, he or myself.—He has'n't clos'd his eyes since.—I do indeed pity him.

KATTY.

And then the pleasure of punishing that impudent fellow, *Vainlove*.

Mrs. FRETFULL.

The very thoughts of it transports me.—Dear *Katty*, lose no time, you know where to find him.

KATTY.

That I learnt from *Terry*.

Mrs. FRETFULL.

If our plot takes, we shall make him tame enough before he leaves *Dublin* yet.

KATTY.

Ay, ay, madam, if we don't make him sick of attacking other men's wives, say I am no chambermaid, that's all.

[Exit.]

D

Enter

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Enter FRETFULL *alone*.

Mr. FRETFULL.

Terry saw the man get into the dining room, and went and call'd the watch; so he was all that time with my wife. Yet I have lost nothing that can be miss'd. The maid cry'd out too—after she had civilly shewn the rogue the way to escape.—My wife, poor soul, was fright'ned almost out of her wits,—for fear of being discover'd; and after all, when I had him fast, in obedience to my wife, I ask'd his pardon, and let him go again; ha! ha! ha!—What if I should hang myself now? why my virtuous wife would certainly take it very kindly of me; for women are mighty apt to hate the sight of a monster of their own making! Lud! lud! that any body should wonder to hear of so many self-murders, when there are so many married men in the nation. Terry! Terry!

Enter TIPPLE drunk, with a tunnel-pot.

TIPPLE.

'Tis a sad thing to be call'd out of one's business. Did you call, sir?

Mr. FRETFULL.

Where's Terry?

TIPPLE.

I have not seen him since—hiccup—'tis a sad thing to be a dry—I am afraid I am in a fever. [Drinks.]

Mr. FRETFULL.

The rascal's drunk.

TIPPLE.

Drunk, master! no, no, that's your mistake. I have been drinking nothing in the world but a little water-gruel, to settle my stomach; that's all—hiccup.

Mrs. FRETFULL.

Was ever man plagu'd as I am! What do you do with that pot and tunnel, sirrah!

TIPPLE.

No harm, sir, no harm. I was bottling off some of the beer—and special beer it is,—tho' I did but just taste it.

Mr.

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Mr. FRETFULL.

Bottling of beer! I believe you was unbottling of it, you rascal.

TIPPLE.

Well, 'tis a hard matter to please some people. 'Twas but t'other day you beat me, because there was so many empty bottles about the house; and now I am filling them, 'tis the same thing. — If you please, sir, I'll call Terry, and two or three more of my acquaintance, and we'll soon empty 'em again.

Mr. FRETFULL.

Now he's drunk, perhaps I may get something out of him relating to my wife's conduct. [*Aside.*] Tiddle, d'ye hear.

TIPPLE.

Yes, yes, sir. — What you please; tho' for my part, I hate the sight of an empty bottle. — But to oblige you, sir, I'll empty 'em all dye see. [*Going.*]

Mr. FRETFULL.

Stay, you dog, and hear what I have to say to you, or I'll break your head.

TIPPLE.

Yes, sir, yes.

Mr. FRETFULL.

Tiddle, you know my wife.

TIPPLE.

Yes, yes, I know my mistress, and so doth every body else, to, to, to be —

Mr. FRETFULL.

Ay, speak out Tiddle, what do you know your mistress to be?

TIPPLE.

As good a woman as ever came into a family; but pray, sir, let me come by the beer will be all spoiled.

[*Reals against his master.*]

Mr. FRETFULL.

You drunken rascal, can't you see? [*Strikes him.*]

TIPPLE.

I think my master's like a turn-stile, he stands in every body's way.

Mr. FRETFULL.

Get out of my house, dog, get out of my house.

[Beats him.]

TIPPLE.

I am gone, sir, I am gone. For the house, I don't regard that so much, d'ye see; but I always mind my business in the cellar. If I was in the family a hundred years, you shall find me *semper eadem*. [Exit.]

Mr. FRETFULL.

Such a wife, and such servants! mercy on me, what is all my care and caution come to! if ever man was born to be a cuckold and a beggar, I am he. [Exit.]

## S C E N E,

VAINLOVE's Lodgings in the INN.

Enter VAINLOVE and KATTY.

VAINLOVE.

'Sblood! your mistress and you are a couple of jilts.— You had the pleasure of seeing me bruised to a mummy last night, and now you are come to see how I look in my fear-cloaths.

KATTY.

If you knew how we pity'd you, you would think better of us; but you brought all these misfortunes on yourself, by coming without acquainting us sooner with your design.

VAINLOVE.

I judge of her regard for me, by the reception she gave me, when I did come.

KATTY.

You surpriz'd her so, that she did not know what she did.

VAINLOVE.

If your lady would convince me that her concern is real, let her contrive some means to tell me so herself.

KATTY.

When?

VAINLOVE.

To night.

KATTY

# The CONAUGHT WIFE. 45

KATTY.

You know she can't come to you.

VAINLOVE.

Then let me come to her.

KATTY.

That will be difficult.

VAINLOVE.

I thought what was her sincerity.

KATTY.

But not impossible. My lady and I have had some conversation on that head already; but there are so many objections.—Must it needs be to night?

VAINLOVE.

Or not at all.—Look you, child, I will not be fool'd.

KATTY.

Indeed but you will. [*Aside.*] Nay, I am commission'd to tell you (if you insist upon coming to night) that she has engaged the fellow, who made the discovery last night to assist in the plot.

VAINLOVE.

This looks like being in earnest. But how, dear girl, which way am I to be admitted?

KATTY.

That isn't yet determined. The way you came in last night won't be practicable again you may be sure; besides, that room is too near my master's chamber.—But do you be in the street before the house after eight, where you shall be met by Terry—

VAINLOVE.

The honest *Munsterman*.

KATTY.

Ay, who will assist you in your entrance from without, while my mistress and I prepare for your reception within.—If the means propos'd should seem a little odd or dangerous, that will be no objection, I presume, to a man of your courage.

VAINLOVE.

None at all, I assure you, my dear; since you have undertook to serve me, I hope you'll accept of a present now.

[*Offers money.*]

KATTY.

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KATTY.

It looks so like being bribed to take money before hand; but when I have serv'd you, as, I hope, I shall, [*Aside*] if you think I deserve any thing by way of reward, why then use your pleasure.

VAINLOVE.

I understand that. [*Aside.*] You are a strange sort of a girl—But prithee, child, hast thou no views of thy own in promoting this affair betwixt me and your mistress?

KATTY.

None that are mercenary, I assure you, sir.

VAINLOVE.

Poor devil, she doats to distraction; but I'll put her out of her pain presently. [*Aside.*] I like you the better for it.—You are very agreeable, and have a world of wit, rot me.

KATTY.

O dear sir, pray keep all your fine things for my mistress,

VAINLOVE.

Fish! Child, I have enough for you both.

KATTY.

You may find yourself mistaken, perhaps. [*Aside.*] But I must be gone.

VAINLOVE.

Not till I have engaged you by some real obligation to secrecy.

KATTY.

O hnd! Sir, what do you mean?

VAINLOVE.

Only to make it your interest to keep counsel, that's all. You can't think what a pretty convenient lodging room mine is. You shall see it.

KATTY.

O blefs me! what, before my mistress?—Pray make an end of your affair with her; and then, if you dare venture upon me, you may depend upon it that I shan't scruple to follow her example, and so, sir, your humble servant. [*Exit*]

VAINLOVE.

I shan't scruple to follow her example; ha! ha! ha! I believe you with all my heart, tho' she's the first of her profession

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profession that ever I knew but what was willing to take precedence of her mistress on such an occasion. But let her have her way, she will be mine in her turn.—But first for the mistress, kind wishing rogue! well, I find sooner or later all women are to be brought to reason.—Last night my ill stars were predominant, I must confess; but to night fortune is resolved to make amends. Well, take one time with another, I am certainly the luckiest fellow in the universe. [Exit.]

## SCENE,

A ROOM in FRETFULL'S HOUSE.

TERRY.

Mercy on me! what will I do now? My master is so angry because I won't be in a plot with my mistress, when I know nothing of it, and make the gentleman that we did take in the tub, the thief that did come into the house; and when I did tell him that I can't know a man's face in the dark, when his back is towards me, he did break my head, and bid me go out of the house—I was almost starv'd when I was out of place before—I wish I could make some work, to get a little money to carry me to my own country. I have a good mind to go to the gentleman, and ask him if he was the thief, and if he was honest man, he will tell me; that is a brave way to make friends with my master.

Enter TIPPLE with wine.

TIPPLE.

Here, Terry, see what I have got. [Sings the first stanza of, Then drink and never spare it.]

TERRY.

My self has bigger reason to be sad than merry—my master bid me go away again. I

TIPPLE.

Never mind him, Terry, never mind him, he said some such thing to me too—but I have slept since, and I have never

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never laid down since I was born in anger, so I forgive him with all my heart. Terry, my love to you. [*Drinks.*]

TERRY. I have no mind to drink.

TIPPLE. 'Sblood, but you shall; our master doth not know when he's well, that's the truth of it; but let us be wiser; why if we should leave him now, what would become of him? where will he find a couple of such sober, civil fellows when we are gone? I'll stay with him out of pure charity,—and so shall you.—Here's to you again. Terry. [*Drinks and fills for Terry.*] “Then drink and never spare it.” [*Sings.*]

TERRY.

[*Drinks.*] You look after the cellar and the garden, and do write in the compting-house sometimes; he will want you more as he does me; you are a schollard, 'twas a brave thing to be a schollard: if I had money, I would go to school; I should soon learn to be a brave schollard; I do know P for Paddy, and M for Moriarty already; and I do know all the rest of the letters by sight, but I don't remember their names.

TIPPLE. Come leave off whining, and drink you rogue you; you are as discontented as if you were troubled with an ill conscience.

TERRY.

Indeed my self has no bad conscience at all—for I never kill't any soul alive, but a collier's horse once, and he did come to life again too—but I wish I had some vic-tuals—I have eat nothing at all since to-morrow.

TIPPLE.

Here's meat, drink, and cloaths, you rogue you.—Here's a mistress and money, and—egad here's everything.—Come, Terry, how do you sing.

TERRY.

I cannot know but one song, and that is an *Irish* one.

TIPPLE.

*Irish!* why that's as good as an *Italian* one.

TERRY. *Wellgelineagud?* TIPPLE.

What dost say?

TIPPLE.

TERRY.

*Well gelinagud*; that is, can you spake *Irish*?

TIPPLE.

Not I, but I am a true *Englishman*, and fond of what I don't understand.

TERRY.

By my soul I have a great cold; hem! I wish nobody at all had never a young kitling to put down my own throat, with the head downwards, and if I cou'd pull it up again by the tail, I believe I wou'd clear away the cobwebs.

TIPPLE.

[Sings]

Why I think you sing as well as some of the opera performers in *Dublin*.

TERRY.

Why I was in *Dublin* before, for two days last winter; I did go up along with 'Squire Poleaway.

TIPPLE.

What did you go up along with him for?

TERRY.

Why he was Member for parliament; so I did go up to take back the coach-horses to plough the ground for barley, to make bread for the servants.

TIPPLE.

Well, and what diversions had you at *Dublin*?

TERRY.

Why I did go along with the 'Squire's servant to *Crow-street Play-house*, and I seed a brave stage-play.

TIPPLE.

What play did you see?

TERRY.

I don't know the name of the play now, but I believes it was king *Larry*; and after that my jewel, there was a little fellow there, call'd Mr. Monkey, who they said was an *Italian*, and he was riding upon a dog, they call'd a *Dutchman*, and by my shoul, Mr. Monkey paid the *Dutchman*, and his comrades to some tune, and after that Mr. Monkey walk'd upon the tight rope, and cleverly too; tho', my dear, he got a little sup in his head, and tumbled off; the devil burn me, but I believe he's wet a fellow.

TIPPLE.

That's very well, faith, come drink. Sing another song.

TERRY.

Indeed my shelf has no more song.

TIPPLE.

Well sing extempore.

TERRY.

Fat.

E

TIPPLE

TIPPLE.

Sing extempore.

TERRY.

Ay, that was very good song I know, but now I think on't I have forgot it.

TIPPLE. Sing any nonsense that comes into thy head—'tis no great matter how we sing, so it makes us merry—however, if you wont sing, I will:

[Sings, He that goes to bed sober, &amp;c.]

TERRY.

Ha! ha! ha! I never did hear so brave a song in life of my days.

[Both sing, 'Tis wine, &amp;c.]

Enter Mr. FRETFULL.

Mr. FRETFUL.

What are you singing and revelling when my heart is breaking—I'll rant you, I'll roar you, you dogs, get out of my house.—Get out of my house, I say.

[Beats 'em; Tipple sings, Fretfull beats him,]

Enter Mrs. FRETFULL.

Mrs. FRETFULL.

For shame Mr. Fretfull—why do you use your servants thus?—what have they done?

Mr. FRETFULL.

They can do nothing but what you will be sure to approve—so long as they keep your counsel.

Mrs. FRETFULL.

Come, come, you wrong them and me by your unjust suspicions, you have made your house a prison ever since I entered it, and now your are turning it into a mad house; in a short time, we shall have you the jest of the whole city.

Mr. FRETFUL.

I don't doubt it at all.

Mrs. FRETFUL.

If you will but be patient, you shall soon be satisfied.

Mr. FRETFULL.

I am satisfied; but I will not be patient.—I know I am a cuckold, but I will be a furious one, I will for all I am a citizen.—I'll murder you and your jade of a maid—fire my house, and hang myself.—I will not be patient.

Mrs. FRETFULL.

Tipple and Terry, pray leave us; you will find Katty in the hall, who will inform you of an affair, wherein I must beg your assistance.

TIPPLE.

Command any thing in my power, madam.

TERRY.

TERRY: M.

Or if it's out of your power, we will do it for you; 'tis a brave lady.

[Exit Tipple and Terry.]

Mrs. FRETFULL. Notwithstanding your present anger, upon a supposition of my falsehood, I can't think but you would be highly pleased to find me innocent.

Mr. FRETFULL. What then?

Mrs. FRETFULL. Why then you may, if you please, soon enjoy that satisfaction.

Mr. FRETFULL. No; never. [Wipes his eyes.]

Mrs. FRETFULL. His concern affects me in the most tender manner [Aside] I know appearances are against me; but I have taken such measures as, I think, can't fail to convince you, that I am not only innocent of what you charge me with, but blameless in every point of my conduct, on this occasion.

Mr. FRETFULL. That's impossible.

Mrs. FRETFULL. You are strangely prepossessed.

Mr. FRETFULL. I won't be imposed upon—Was not the man we took last night the same that was in the house with you?

Mrs. FRETFULL. It was.

Mr. FRETFULL. And you persuaded me to let him go—

Mrs. FRETFULL. I don't deny it.

Mr. FRETFULL. You can't.

Mrs. FRETFULL. I don't.

Mr. FRETFULL. And yet—

Mrs. FRETFULL. And yet I am innocent.

Mr. FRETFULL. Prodigious! where did you send your maid to-day?

Mrs. FRETFULL. To him.

Mr. FRETFULL. For what?

Mrs. FRETFULL. To encourage him to come again.

## THE CONAUGHT WIFE.

MR. FRETFULL.

And yet you are innocent.

[Mrs. FRETFULL.]

So I am; and the present uneasiness we both suffer is entirely owing to your own suspicious temper, which I could prove unwisely, if you would give me leave.

[Mr. FRETFULL.]

I wish you could, that the *Cork Merchant*, and her whole cargo, worth 20,000*l.* were at the bottom of the sea.

[Mrs. FRETFULL.]

That wish was surprizingly kind; I never thought till now that you lov'd any thing so well as your money.

[Mr. FRETFULL.]

I have lov'd that and you too well; but I am sufficiently punished, for both of you now are lost. Riches have lost their value with me—since they could not keep you mine, I despise 'em.

[Mrs. FRETFULL.]

Were you once cured of your jealousy, your covetousness I fear would soon return.

[Mr. FRETFULL.]

You wrong me. Reason has cured that folly, but love I find is not to be subdued. I have been to blame to think to secure a woman's inclinations by severity and constraint. I see my fault too late.

[Mrs. FRETFULL.]

Be but as much master of yourself for one hour longer, and I dare promise for us both, we shall never know an uneasy one after it.

[Mrs. FRETFULL.]

Ha! [Shaking his head.]

[Mrs. FRETFULL.]

You doubt me still; but follow me, and observe my conduct. [Exit.]

[Mr. FRETFULL.]

She seems strangely confident; if she shou'd be honest after all,—I dare not to hope it.—However, I'll see what she intends; for after all, a cuckold is the most horrid monster in human nature, and I'd rather have no head, than one fit only for men to hang their hats on. [Exit.]

SCENE changes to the Street.

The Front of FRETFULL's House. A Crane.

Enter VAINLOVE.

TERRY below; KATTY and TIPPLe above.

VAINLOVE,

Hift, hift—where the devil is this *Munster* mercury.—Katty told me I should find him here.

[TERRY.]

TERRY.

Och! I was going to be *colly molly*, for 'fraid you would not come.—my mistress expects you.

VAINLOVE.

Where is she?

TIPPLE.

She's up in the warehouse at the top of the house.—Will you go to her?—and then you may go to Mrs. *Katty's* chamber; that is a pure place; my master does never comes there.

VAINLOVE.

How shall I get up? Do you think I can fly?

TERRY.

O-I will shew you the way presently.

[*They above sling down Terry a rope from the crane.*]

VAINLOVE.

What the devil's to be done now? what's this for?

TERRY.

Lord help you, did you never see a crane that they use to draw up goods withal before?

VAINLOVE.

Ay, ay, I understand you now, and so I'm to be fasten'd to this and go to heaven in a string, am I? ha! ha! ha!

TERRY.

And it is well for you too, you can get there any way; by my soul, I believe you'd have but small chance, if it wasn't for the string itself.—Come, shall I put the slings about you?

VAINLOVE.

Ha! ha! ha! this is the most comical adventure.—But is no danger, honest Terry?

TERRY.

No, no, the rope is strong enough to hang twenty such as you.

VAINLOVE.

Be sure you make it fast.

TERRY.

Ay, ay, you shall find it fast enough, I warrant you.

[*Whistles; Vainlove is drawn up*]

KATTY above in the Balcony.

Hold, *Tippie*, hold, fasten the rope, he's high enough.

OMNES.

Ha! ha! ha!

TERRY.

This is brave sport; by my soul, he looks like the sign of the yellow sheep, ha! ha! ha! [Exit]

VAINLOVE.

What's the meaning of this? Mrs. *Katty*! Mrs. *Katty*!

KATTY.

What wou'd you be pleas'd to have, sir?

VAINLOVE.

Have, sir, plague what do you let me hang dangling here, for?

KATTY.

We cant possibly do it, sir? Such a misfortune!

VAINLOVE.

What's the matter?

KATTY.

There's a knot in the rope—we can't draw you a bit higher.

VAINLOVE.

Then let me down again.

KATTY.

The rope's out of the pulley,—we can't do that neither.

VAINLOVE.

Zounds!

KATTY.

O dear sir, don't make a noise, you'll wake my master? *[Exit from the balcony.]*

VAINLOVE.

So it seems I am to hang here by the loins, like a monkey, to make them sport.

Enter TERRY and TIPPLE, with sticks.

VAINLOVE.

Who's there? Terry, where's your mistress?

TERRY.

My mistress will come presently.

TIPPLE

In the mean time, she has sent you this, and this.

*[Beats him.]*

And this, you catterwauling son of a whore.

TIPPLE and TERRY alternately.

And this, and this.

VAINLOVE.

Murder; for heaven's sake, gentlemen—murder.

Enter Mr. and Mrs FRETFLU, at a distance, observing

Mrs. FRETFULL.

Hold, hold, you have done mighty well.

VAINLOVE.

O madam, are you there.

Mrs. FRETFULL.

Ay, ay, and now you are bound to your good behaviour. I may venture to talk with you.

VAINLOVE.

Then this is a design, a plot of your own.

Mrs. FRETFULL.

I acknowledge it.

VAINLOVE.

Very frank, truly.

Mrs.

Mrs. FRETFULL.

I think you did not use much more ceremony when you surpriz'd me last night, and threaten'd if I offered to raise the family, to swear you came there by my appointment, which oblig'd me to contribute to your escape at that time, and wait for a proper opportunity to justify myself to my husband, and punish you as you deserve.

VAINLOVE.

I hope you think you have done both sufficiently.

Mrs. FRETFULL.

No, before you are releas'd, I must know what encourag'd you to make so insolent an attempt upon my honour.

VAINLOVE.

I am put to the question, and must answer.—Why then to confess the truth, tho' I know by experience that you wou'd not part with what you call your honour, before you were married, as thinking it necessary to get you a husband, yet I thought it cou'd be of no manner of consequence afterwards; but what assur'd me of success, was his usage of you, for I know enough of the sex, to be certain that there are women who cuckold their husbands out of revenge, who wou'd never have done it out of inclination.

Mr. FRETFULL.

Let the gentleman down.—I have heard enough. I have the joy to find I am no cuckold; but at the same time I am asham'd to think that I have deserv'd to be one.—My dear, can you forgive what's past?

Mrs. FRETFULL.

Are you so kind as to ask it. [*Embracing.*] Now I am truly happy.

Mr. FRETFULL.

If the most perfect liberty in your person and expences; if my love, life, and fortune, can make you happy, you shall be so,—we will be happy.—You, sir, for the good consequences, shall be forgiven for your ill designs.—Kitty shall have a husband,—Tippie shall keep the keys of the cellar; and Terry—

TERRY.

Ay, what shall myself have?

Mr. FRETFULL.

Why you shall have a master to instruct you, that you may be wise as well as honest.

TERRY.

That will be brave indeed; but when I learn to be wise, if I dont forget to be honest, that will be braver still.

Mrs.

# THE CONQUERING WIFE

Mr. FRETFULL.

Fetch some music, and call my neighbours—I'll dedicate this night to mirth and joys; and, as a proof of my satisfaction in my wife's conduct, you shall be welcome, sir, to make one of the company; and if you'll dance, my wife shall be your partner.

VAINLOVE.

Sir, I thank you with all my heart; but as my business is over here, and I find I shan't be able to sit a horse this fortnight, I must secure a place in the *Mullingar* stage against the morning.

Mrs. FRETFULL.

Well, use your pleasure.—But pray, sir, don't forget to entertain your friends in the country with what you have seen that's remarkable at *Dublin*.

Mrs. FRETFULL.

As for instance, a woman thought her honour of consequence, tho' she had got her a husband.

Mr. FRETFULL.

And a provoking husband, who for all that was no cuckold.

KATTY.

And a chambermaid that refus'd money.

TERRY.

And a *Munsterman* that was neither pimp nor porter.

TIPPLE.

And a sober fellow who kept the keys of the cellar.

VAINLOVE.

I shall do all the justice, to say you are the most extraordinary family that ever I met with in the whole course of my existence—so, *sans ceremonie*—Ladies and gentlemen, I am your eternally devoted, humble servant.

[Exit.]

OMNES.

Ha! ha! ha!

TERRY.

Here's the music and company.

Mr. FRETFULL.

An ample fortune, and a virtuous wife,

Are good foundations for a happy life.

But curst with groundless fears, with all his store

The husband's wretched, and the miser's poor.



